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# REALISATION OF THE GIRL-CHILD POTENTIALS THROUGH VALUE-ORIENTATION IN HOME ECONOMICS EDUCATION

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## Abstract

This paper is a review of the value system which directs the life of most African societies. The paper x-rays the idea of public turn of events, strengthening of Nigerian girl-child which when achieved would upgrade Nigerian girls in the realm of greatness and efficiency towards upgraded nation-building. The impediments of the girl-child to schooling is limitless and these include political, strict religious and socio-cultural variables among others. This paper focuses on training which is the right of the girl-child and a key to changing her life through value-orientation in Home Economics Education, thereby making her a mindful individual for the general public. This paper likewise proposes that since the role played by the girl-child in monetary advancement is incredibly significant, they ought to be equipped with great instruction for open doors to improve their social, political, and monetary investment towards upgraded nation-building. It is noted that the learning process at school usually aims at modifying the behaviors of learners so that they can sustain the value chain. Value-orientation through Home Economics Education is complete with different vocations in Clothing and Textile, Home Management, Foods and Nutrition from which the girl-child can obtain value-added education for self-sufficiency and national development.

**Keywords:** Girl-child, Home economics education, nation building, value-orientation

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## Introduction

Every society has a prescribed set of values that are held sacred. These values conform individuals to be guided in accordance with predetermined rights and privileges. They are passed from generation to generation in the form of religious beliefs, marriage and burial rites, ethics, and cultural values which mold the disposition of children as they grow. According to Schroeder, Chatfield, Singh, Chennels & Herissone-Kelly, (2019) there seems to be a kind of clear understanding of the pattern of behavior that was acceptable such as respect for elders, truthfulness, neatness, and participation in domestic chores, as well as those behaviors which the society frowns at, such as teenage pregnancy, stealing, lying and other vices. The societies show a clear commitment to the set of values or goals and use them as the basis for making decisions as well as settling disputes when they arise. These rights and privileges are made known to youths and adolescents through orientation programs such as festivals and traditional gatherings and meetings. Josephine & Nwakaego (2017), defined value orientation or moral principle as the principles or rights and wrongs that are accepted by an individual or a social group. It is also the direction given to a person's attitudes and thinking by observable belief system, standards or traditions (Schwartz, 2014)

The girl-child is a biological female offspring from birth to age 18. This period comprises infancy, childhood and then adolescence. She builds her personality during this period and depends so much on her role models and her innate potential, which peaks in adulthood. She is seen as an individual with potential to undertake domestic chores, grow up into womanhood, marry and raise children (Konyeme, 2016).

Challenges of the girl-child include crisis of adaptation and acceptability during the period of adolescence and transformation into early adulthood. She is exposed to gender stereotyping especially when she comes from a family of uneducated parents. She is always the one to drop out of school in the face of scarce resources for children's education. She is the one that must go hawking for meals to be placed on the family dining table. In some societies, the girl-child is hurriedly married off to settle old family debts. The summary of all these is that the girl-child suffers low enrolment in secondary and tertiary education, especially in Northern Nigeria. As a woman, she is also exposed to overexploitation by the men folk in the implementation of some religious, traditional and cultural norms (Andrew and Aghaihu, 2016). For instance in some societies, most women inherit nothing from their fathers assets, while in some

others, women are subjected to the dehumanizing experience of drinking water used in bathing their late husbands to ascertain their innocence.

### **Education of the girl-child**

To remain focused in life, the girl-child requires regular counseling. Michael (2011) noted that the girl-child education is the most important aspect of human development and key to successful living. To enhance scholarship of the girl-child, most State Governments in Nigeria have introduced various programmes to encourage girl-child learning, including free and compulsory primary and secondary education for male and female children (Onyido & Osigwe, 2017). Onyido, *et al.*, (2017) further documented that girl-child education equips the female child with capacity to exploit the environment, attain appreciable numerical literacy and vocational skills for functional living in the society

In a normal educational setting, values are projected with instructive results that would be gainful to individuals who attempt a specific course of study. These values are designed to meet the needs of every learner across academic disciplines. Home Economics as a course program is a branch of vocational education that is structured to improve and educate people for family living. Its areas of specialization include Home Management, Foods, and Nutrition, as well as Clothing and Textiles, (Italoye Ibikun 2020) and each branch of Home Economics allows trainees to specialize in different vocations as follows:-

**Home management:** Interior designing, merchandising, consumer affairs, child care, family life, advertising, and promotion. **Foods and Nutrition:** Nutrition, dietetics, food services, and management, food research and development, food technology, catering, and teaching. **Clothing and Textile:** Fashion designing, dyeing, beauty care, and hairdressing as well as teaching. Akiti and Onyemah (2016), reported that it is extremely important to give girls access to formal education as this equips them with the ability to make discriminative and challenging initiatives. They also noted that such educated girls are better positioned to seek and obtain quality medical services for family members as well as provide better nutritional meals. They further cited a UNESCO report which postulated that girls with lesser exposure to education were more prone to sexual violence, and insecure school environments, including inadequate sanitation.

According to Asuquo and Maliki (2017) values are virtues or convictions that fashion and dominate individual action and decision-making, including anything believed to be worthwhile, desirable and acceptable to an individual and the society in which he lives. Iwele, Egbule, Orhorrho & Utebor (2016) reported that esteem orientation usually begins at the home. Families, friends, and relations are important in the development of the moral, social and educational security of the child. Value orientation reinforces the girl-child to resist societal injustices, gender suppression, oppression and discrimination, trafficking in persons, wife battery, baby sales/baby factories, and so on. In other to protect the girl-child from the above social ills, her future should be secured for better living through quality education.

By and large, it is very crucial therefore that the girl-child realizes the functional roles expected of her by the society, such as good grooming, respect for cultural norms and child bearing. The culture and value system of societies are strongly being undermined today by the negative and positive components of globalization. This brings with it a chain of value change. As the socio-cultural landscape of societies change, the growing female is expected to be subjected to value-orientation to remain abreast with her expected roles, thereby maintaining her relevance within the socio-cultural heritages of her society.

### **Value-orientation for marriage and childbearing**

The girl-child by nature is biologically endowed for procreation. Sexuality education of the girl-child begins from the home and continues until she is of a marriageable age. While pregnant, a bond is usually formed between mother and fetus, and when the baby is born the mother becomes her first closest companion. She teaches the child his/her names and those of objects around him as well as basic hygiene and respect for people. By implication, the girl-child is the foundation of values for the family. For this reason, she is taught to remain celibate so as not to become pregnant before wedlock. Mulikat, Adegbite, and Sotoyinbo (2014) also suggested that the girl-child should be exposed to sexuality education. They noted that sexuality education would enhance the development of values, mental attitudes, physical appearances, beliefs, emotions, likes and dislikes, and other aspects of human socialization. Konyeme (2016) further reiterated that if you educate a woman you educate a nation

because this educated girl-child will bring up children better and serve as a great role model to the children, in addition to improving the economic status of the family.

#### **Value-orientation for entrepreneurship**

The average girl-child is naturally endowed with skills for mercantilism and entrepreneurship. However, the ravaging consequences of the global economic recession have subjected young Nigerian females to exploitation through child labor, human trafficking, prostitution, drug trafficking, and early marriages (Aturu, 2014). One major consequence of this trend is that the girl-child is denied the right to access quality education which inadvertently affects the growth of the society. However, Nantume (2021) reflected that empowering women intellectually, socially, and politically through education is imperative for redressing gender inequality, and enhancing their participation in decision making, family life, community development, and nation-building.

Through value-oriented education, the girl-child would develop abilities, attitudes as well as behavioral adaptations for effective utilization of knowledge for wealth creation including changing her self-image and improving her skills. Home Economics Education is robust in scope, and being a course program that directs skill acquisition in various areas, would equip learners with needed aptitudes in fashion dyeing, decorations, hospitality training, child care/crèche management, cooking, dressmaking, and confectionaries. Through the acquisition of quality Home Economics Education, the girl-child would develop positive values and attitudes, as well as competitive skills needed for self-reliance and nation-building.

#### **Value-orientation for morality**

According to Barminas (2014) every African society has its differing code of conduct. Each individual is expected to be morally upright and guided by the principles of his faith. Parents give moral training to their children, and when this is complemented by family life education, the girl-child is adequately prepared for personal growth and development which invariably impacts nation-building.

From biblical perspectives, parents (as well as the school) have a major role to play in the upbringing of children, especially the girl-child. Proverbs 22:6 wrote that we should “train a child in the way he

should grow and when he is old he shall not depart from it”. When the right moral code is acquired, the girl-child dresses in non-provocative manners, respect her elders and colleagues, and expresses love and kindness to people around her.

#### **Conclusion**

The significance of value-orientation through Home Economics Education in the life of the girl-child is enormous. Inculcating the right values through dedicated training for marriage and childbearing, entrepreneurship and morality ensures that the girl-child realizes her full potentials and is transformed into a useful member of the society. All parameters for educating the girl-child to imbibe the right values should be accorded national priority backed up with legislative commitment so that her potentials are realized for meaningful contributions to the growth and development of the society. Educating the girl-child is a positive investment for national development. Apart from bringing their innate qualities to bear in managing the affairs of the home, they will deploy their skills and abilities acquired through Home Economics Education to provide goods and services that would positively impact the economy.

#### **Recommendations:**

To achieve quality value-orientation for the girl-child, the paper recommends as follows:

- Parents should spend quality time with their female children at home to give them value-oriented home-based education which would prepare them for greater learning experiences in school and challenges in the society.
- Value-orientation for decent moral, non-promiscuous life styles should be given to the girl-child.
- Female children should be encouraged to undertake careers in vocational education so that they can be oriented towards achieving their innate potentials.
- Cottage industries and viable vocational centres should be set up in various localities to accommodate the aspirations of girls who are unable to access formal Home Economics Education.

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